A Study of Urban School Governance

A Report Prepared for the General Assembly
by the Joint Committee on Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report summarizes issues pertaining to the governance of urban schools in Missouri. By definition in Missouri Statutes, only Kansas City 33, or Kansas City Missouri School District (KCMSD), qualifies as an urban school district (Section 160.011.14 RSMo.). The report begins with the historical context for the evolution of school board governance in the United States including the most recent alternative models of school governance. Also included in the report is testimony from the public hearing on urban school governance held by the Joint Committee on Education, a summary of a workshop on school governance presented at the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Conference, and data on KCMSD all of which inform this study of urban school governance in Missouri.

Contemporary schools boards exist in one of two general structures: elected or appointed. Throughout this report, the variations of both models and the complexities and challenges associated with them will be discussed. KCMSD is the only district in Missouri to have some members of the board elected by wards (subdistricts). This structure has been in statutes since 1967. Under this structure, a voter within KCMSD will vote for four of the nine members of the board: three at-large members plus the member representing the voter's ward.

In the discussion on urban school governance at the Joint Committee on Education public forum, a few individuals referenced appointed school boards, whether by a city's mayor, city council, governor, or some combination of these. The appointed governance model seen in some urban districts around the country would present logistic challenges in KCMSD because of attendance boundaries of the district and the city limits of Kansas City and surrounding communities.

At the Joint Committee on Education public forum on urban school governance, several individuals referred to the process for filling vacancies on the KCMSD Board of Education when a member leaves office before his or her term has expired. Prior to now, vacancies have been filled by a majority vote of the sitting members of the board. Section 162.492.8 RSMo. as enacted by SB 291 (2009) changes this procedure so that any vacancy occurring more than six months prior to the expiration of the term will be filled by special election.

Every effort has been made to thoroughly document sources of research and data presented in this report. Data presented by individuals offering public testimony have been footnoted for verification of accuracy.

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Section 1 School Board Governance
Part A - Research Review

HISTORY

The majority of American school boards have served essentially the same function and retained the same structure since the beginning of the twentieth century. Prior to the twentieth century most urban boards were elected by wards. By the early twentieth century, boards elected by wards were replaced by boards elected at large (Kirst, 2004; Land, 2002). Designing school boards as nonpartisan bodies with elections held independent of other major elections was intentional and was a way of separating education from other political or governmental activities (Epstein, 2004; Hess, 2002; Land; Usdan, 1994). These "apolitical" boards were a product of the Industrial Era when there was a reliance on experts and professionals to run schools (Henig & Rich, 2004).

Coinciding with federal intervention to desegregate schools, some urban school boards in the 1960s and 1970s began returning to ward board elections to improve representation among all populations within the district (Land, 2002).[1] Leal, Martinez-Ebers, & Meiers (2004) cited research showing that school boards have greater minority representation when members are elected by ward rather than at-large. There is a limited body of research on how structure affects representation, but not how governance structure affects governance quality (Meier & Juenke, 2005).

While acknowledging the civil rights motivations behind some large districts moving to boards elected by ward, Kirst (1994) wrote that the focus on representation by ward may not be healthy for the district as a whole. Research has shown that larger boards and boards elected by wards experience the greatest amount of conflict (Grissom, 2009). Some have called for eliminating elections by wards because members focus on patronage over good governance for the district as a whole (Hill, Warner-King, Campbell, McElroy, & Munoz-Colon, 2002). By contrast, research has not demonstrated that, gender and racial diversity alone are associated with more or less conflict than more homogenous boards (Grissom).

Over the past couple of decades, the intentional separation of education governance from other local governance has been questioned by some who would support a city government and school system that

[1] Since 1967, the Kansas City Missouri School District has had the majority of its members elected by wards. In the current structure, six members represent wards and three are elected at-large.

are more closely connected and centrally governed (Henig & Rich, 2004; Land, 2002; Wong & Shen, 2005).

Community satisfaction may be gauged to a degree by the number of incumbents reelected to a school board. However, Alsbury (2003) cautions that looking purely at turnover number could be misleading depending on whether or not the turnover is across many different seats or only across a couple of seats while the rest of the board remains stable (Alsbury).

ROLE OF BOARDS[2]

The most important role of a school board is setting the district vision (Campbell & Greene, 1994). However, school board members often find themselves in competing roles or struggling with role confusion (Campbell & Greene; Hill et al. 2002). Kirst (1994) said that boards are expected to represent all three functions of government, but the consequence of having too many roles to fill is that boards find themselves removed from the center of significant reform. Henig and Rich (2004) assert that the goal of reform should be unification of objectives across all stakeholders. One consistent finding in studies of effective governance: the school board focuses on policy not administration (Grissom, 2009).

In a large, nationwide survey, board members reported that their primary concerns were about student achievement, finance, and special education. On other issues, board members in large and small districts responded differently when asked about issues of importance. Large districts emphasized teacher shortages and student discipline more than mid-size and smaller districts (Hess, 2002). When asked in which areas would they (board members) like to receive more training, the most common response for large boards was “board accountability” (Hess). In another study involving six effective urban school districts, researchers found that the most common characteristic of effective boards which distinguished them from other boards was their strong relationship with the community (Land, 2002).

MAYORAL ADMINISTRATION

The impact that urban schools have on a city’s economic and social well-being has resulted in many mayors becoming more directly interested in school issues than they have been in the past (Kirst, 2004;

[2] The role of boards will also be addressed in the next section in a summary of the presentation given by Dr. Randy Quinn at the Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Conference entitled “The School Governance Issue: What is the Answer?”

Land, 2002; Wong & Shen, 2003). When mayors become involved, the focus is on benefit to the entire city not just the schools (Wong & Shen, 2005; Wong, 2006). Mayors have used their political capital to gain support for city schools, and mayoral political capital is a necessity for board restructuring to be successful (Wong & Shen, 2003).

Logistical Considerations with Mayoral Administrations

Until now, mayoral administrations have been limited to those larger cities where the boundaries of city are consistent with the boundaries of the school district (Wong, Shen, Anagnostopoulus, & Rutledge, 2007). In their study of mayoral administrations, Wong, et al. (2007) considered only districts where the majority of the students came from one city, and where the majority of students within a city attend the same district.[3] They note complications that occur when these conditions are not met. "When boundary lines significantly overlap, political problems arise because a mayor only has control over the part of the school district in his or her city. Changes are possible, but they may require the politically costly process of revising local charters and state codes" (Wong, et al., 2007, p. 189).

Support for Mayoral Administration

Supporters of mayoral administration view the mayor's office as a clearer line of accountability (Meier, 2004). A mayor's tenure is often longer than the average urban superintendent which may be viewed as a greater investment in the community.

Supporters of mayoral administration believe that mayors can work outside of the education community to recruit non-traditional leaders (Wong, 2006). Some see teachers organizations and veteran district administrators as barriers to integrated governance (Wong & Shen, 2005).Mayors may be able to go beyond the scope of what traditional educators do and be willing to work beyond organized interests (Wong, 2006). Grissom (2009) found that the level of involvement of teachers organizations in school board elections was associated with a greater level of conflict among board members. However, caution in interpretation is warranted due to possibility of endogeniety. In other words, a board in perpetual conflict may encourage unions to take a more assertive role.

[3] There are 11 school districts contained all or in part within the city limits of Kansas City: Center 58, Grandview C-4, Hickman Mills C-1, Independence 30, Kansas City 33, Lee's Summit R-VII, Liberty 53, North Kansas City 74, Park Hill, Platte County R-III, and Raytown C-2. Sources: Dr. Tony Stansberry, Area Supervisor, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and the Missouri School Directory 2008-2009.

Opposition to Mayoral Administration

Opposition to mayoral administration centers on the lack of democracy in appointed school boards and concern about education becoming too involved in politics. The larger role that mayors play, the more costly their elections become, opening the door for big business involvement in elections (Meier, 2005). In addition, opponents see a greater risk of limiting minority participation through mayoral control (Wong, 2006). Central to this governance structure is debate over whether mayors or other non-educator administrators can offer the expertise necessary to transform a school (Wong & Shen, 2003). Sometimes mayoral administration may not produce as dramatic an effect as is desired (Henig & Rich, 2005). Because changes in schools do not happen quickly even with a major policy shift, it is difficult to assess the long-term impact of mayoral control (Wong & Shen, 2005).

For example, the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS)[4] prepared a report on mayoral administration in Washington, D.C. schools. The CGCS said the mayor's plan did not address the root of the problems in Washington, D.C. schools such as reducing the top-heavy administration or the "multiple layers of bureaucracy overseeing the school system" (Council of Great City Schools, 2007, p.2). In addition, the CGCS did not find any improvements made to the budget process, nor did the plan specifically state how the mayor would be accountable for making progress with D.C. schools (Council of Great City Schools, 2007). Whether or not mayoral takeover has improved financial stability in school districts remains unresolved in the research literature (Henig & Rich, 2005; Wong & Shen, 2005).

Mayoral Appointees

The success of any mayoral administration will depend on the people the mayor appoints and their effectiveness on the board. (Land, 2002; Wong & Shen, 2003). According to Wong (2006), a mayor's ability to transform a school district has more to do with the ability to transform public opinion than to transform schools directly. Representation on school boards may be substantive or could be symbolic. Mayors may appoint members who represent racial and ethnic diversity, but they may not represent social and economic diversity (Leal et al., 2004; Meier, 2005).

[4] The Council of the Great City Schools is an organization that is openly opposed to mayoral takeovers of school districts. (www.cgcs.org) Their findings represent the perspective of their members, but their report can serve as a basis for discussion.

Another consideration with mayoral administration concerns the opportunities provided to students. For example, in one study, opportunities provided to Latino students often varied based on whether the Latino community had representation on the school board. With representation, students were less likely to be tracked, less likely to be disproportionately overrepresented in disciplinary actions, less likely to be disproportionately underrepresented in gifted education, and more likely to have an ELL program that provide services beyond the minimum required (Leal et al., 2004).

Summary of Mayoral Administration

Any restructuring must consider the community context: what will the community be willing to support? (Meier & Juenke, 2005). "Whether or not a proposed governance change appears compelling when considered in the abstract, the likelihood of its being adopted, supported, and given a chance to succeed will depend in large measure on the way it is perceived in the various communities that the jurisdiction comprises" (Henig & Rich, 2005, pp. 264-265).

Even with the increased interest in mayoral governance, the majority of mayors across the country are not involved in school district administration. In the 75 largest districts in U.S. about 12% have appointed boards (Wong, 2006). In most communities across the country, citizens have not objected to elected boards (Henig & Rich, 2005). Additionally, mayoral control is not possible in all urban areas because school district boundaries are not always consistent with city boundaries (Kirst, 2004).

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Approximately 1/6 of all public school students reside in the nation's 50 largest school districts (Land, 2002).

In some urban districts with mayoral administrations, mayors appoint some but not all members (e.g., Oakland); in other urban districts mayors and governors appoint jointly (e.g., Baltimore, Philadelphia) (Wong & Shen, 2005).

From a survey of 2,000 school boards[5] (Hess, 2002).

- In districts with >25,000 students: 95.9% elected, 4.2% appointed. Members appointed to fill vacated seats between elections made up the majority of those who were appointed. Those appointed by mayors were the minority (Hess, 2002).
- Of the boards surveyed, 26.6% of large districts had nine or more members. The most common board size for large districts was seven to eight members (47.9%). (Hess, 2002).

CONCLUSION

School boards have experienced only minor changes in structure and function since the early twentieth century. Some changes, such as elections by wards, were brought about to provide broader representation within a school district, but research has found the greatest amount of conflict within school boards elected by wards. One recent change in some urban school districts is a move to appointed school boards with the appointments most often made by the mayor. Mayoral administrations have seen some success in major urban school districts (e.g., Boston); however, the potential for a successful mayoral administration is dependent on a number of factors from the political capital of the mayor to the consistency of school district and city boundaries.

[5] 41% response rate; 99 districts that responded to the survey have enrollments >25,000.

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Part B - School Governance Workshop Summary

"The School Governance Issue: What is the Answer?" was presented by Dr. Randy Quinn, Senior Partner, The Aspen Group International, LLC, on July 10, 2009 at the Missouri Legislative Black Caucus Foundation Conference. Dr. Quinn spent 30 years serving as executive director for two state school boards associations—19 years in Alabama and 11 years in Colorado. Dr. Quinn holds a doctorate from the University of Alabama. He has authored more than 400 articles for journals and newsletters. Stacey Preis, Executive Director for the Joint Committee on Education, was invited to serve as the respondent to Dr. Quinn's presentation.

Dr. Quinn began his presentation by identifying what he noted as the central tenets of effective governance and the characteristics of ineffective governance. He also discussed changes in expectations in governance over the past 30 years as well as different models of governance. Though various board structures were presented and discussed briefly, Dr. Quinn's focus was on how boards can adopt behaviors which will allow them to function more effectively.

The substance of Dr. Quinn's presentation was the introduction of the system of Coherent Governance® developed by his firm. He noted that the school board's primary function is to lead, serve, and represent the citizens of the district.

Coherent Governance® is based on the following ten principles:

1. The school board is accountable to citizens and serves as their trustee.
2. The school board as a whole, not as individuals, governs the organization by majority vote.
3. The school board should function as the policy level rather than operational level.
4. The school board should express its broadest values/concerns prior to addressing smaller concerns.
5. The school board should define its expectations and then delegate the responsibility for executing those expectations.
6. The primary duty of the school board is to determine the desired results for students and to expect achievement.
7. The school board sets policy which provides the framework operational decisions as opposed to approving administrative recommendations.
8. The school board deliberately creates its own culture in policy.
9. The school board empowers the superintendent to make decisions without requiring board approval.

10. The school board holds the superintendent accountable for results and evaluates the superintendent based on achievement.

In general, the principles of Coherent Governance® direct school boards to be proactive in establishing solid parameters based upon the values and goals of the board and within which the superintendent can confidently make administrative decisions. According to Coherent Governance® school boards should avoid the pattern of the superintendent presenting ideas to the board which the board then accepts or rejects. According to Dr.. Quinn, this practice leads to confusion about accountability for decisions.

Dr. Quinn cautions that the principles of Coherent Governance® are susceptible to failure if

- the board and superintendent are not fully supportive of and committed to the model;
- the school board sees Coherent Governance® as a quick fix to multidimensional problems;
- the school board or the staff are impatient with implementing the model;
- the school board focuses on the technical details of the model rather than the underlying principles.

Section 2 Urban School Governance in Missouri: Kansas City Public Schools

Part A - 2008 Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) Review

The Kansas City 33 School District, or KCMSD, had its 4th cycle MSIP review in 2007-2008[6]. From the summary of findings, reviewers from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reported the following specific to the Board of Education:

- "The district has developed a plan to evaluate programs and services; however, there is no evidence that the board formally evaluates programs and services on a regular schedule. Therefore, they are not able to take action to ensure that these programs efficiently achieve their goals. (8.1)"

- "Board of Education members do not limit themselves to establishing policies and other activities specifically mentioned in the district's Board of Education Policy Manual. (The policies include but may not be limited to: BBA, BBP, and BDA). Further, board members are involved in implementing the policies and the day-to-day operation of the school district. (8.3)"

- "The Board of Education has created and participates in a committee system that informs board action. The district's administrators make reports to the committees but do not serve on the committees. Resolutions suggested by these committees have been placed on the board's Consent Agenda and passed without due consideration by the board as a whole. This is in violation of the board's Policy BDDB and Regulation BDDB-R (8.3)" [7]

- "The most recent audit of the district cited numerous audit exceptions. These exceptions would not be present if the district employed a CFO trained in Missouri school finance and accepted auditing principles. (8.6.1-2)"

Related to the overall status of the district, the review noted the following:

[6] The full MSIP report for KCMSD is available through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

[7] On August 12, 2009, the KCMSD board voted to abolish the committee system for the district. KCMSD board members will no longer chair or sit on district committees.

- "Multiple changes in district level leadership contributes to a lack of sustained planning for improvement in student achievement throughout the district. (8.3)"

- "According to staff and student focus groups and interviews and district and building AQ data, this district does not consistently provide a safe and orderly environment for learning. (6.6)"

- "The district is out of compliance with federal programs. (7.7)"

- "There is no evidence that the district evaluates new programs based upon student data or educational research. (8.1)"

KCMSD MSIP Accountability Plan[8]

In response to the MSIP review findings, KCMSD worked with DESE to develop an accountability plan. The first three objectives specifically address governance:

Objective 1 – The Board will set a clear vision, mission, goals and direction for the school district.

Objective 2 – The Board will attract, recruit, select, hire and retain a qualified superintendent committed to the execution of the Accountability Plan; provide appropriate governance oversight to assist the superintendent the Accountability Plan through ongoing dialogue, periodic performance evaluation, and strategic resource allocation.

Objective 3 – The Board of Education will adopt, implement, monitor and evaluate governance policies, procedures and systems that organize the Board and its work according to research-proven best practices for maximum student achievement.

The full accountability plan which specifically includes strategies for addressing each deficiency may be found on the KCMSD website http://www2.kcmsd.net/Pages/msip_pr.aspx.

[8] Source: MSIP Accountability Turnaround Plan – The Path to Full Accreditation in 2010. http://www2.kcmsd.net/Pages/msip_pr.aspx.

Part B – Kansas City Public Schools: 10-year Board of Education election summary

Table 1. KCMSD 10-Year Election Summary

	Voter turnout percentage[9]	Board member changes
2009		No board members on ballot
2008	13.0% (at large); 10.5% (D1)	**ELECTED**: West (at large), Benson (D1)
2007		No board members on ballot
2006		No board members on ballot
2005		No board members on ballot
2004	13.1% (D1); 11.1% (D5)	**ELECTED**: Plowman (D1), Harris (D5)
2003		No board members on ballot
2002	9.4 % (at large); 7.8% (D4) 14.7% (D2); 9.9% (D3); 7.4% (D6)	**ELECTED**: Smith (at large), Ragsdale (D4) **UNOPPOSED**: Pelofsky (D2), Kelly (D3), Simmons (D6)
2001		No board members on ballot
2000	9.6% (at large); 11.6% (D1); 8.4% (D5); 8% (D6)	**ELECTED**: Mauro (at large), Plowman (D1), Warrick (D5), Kelly (D6) **UNOPPOSED**: Hensley (D3)
1999		No board members on ballot

[9] Source: Percentages calculated with data from the Kansas City Election Board, http://www.kceb.org/electioninfo/pastelections.php.

Part C - Public Forum Summary

The Joint Committee on Education held a public forum on urban school governance on Tuesday, July 21, 2009, at the Bruce Watkins Center in Kansas City.

Approximately 140 people attended the forum, and 18 individuals offered a public statement to the Joint Committee on Education. Statements were audio recorded and archived with the Joint Committee on Education.

The following quotes represent the views of the individual making the statement. Specific factual claims that have been verified are footnoted.

Comments are presented in alphabetical order by witness. If the witness indicated on the witness form that he or she was representing an organization, that affiliation has been included. Only those comments pertaining specifically to urban school governance are included in the excerpts.

Excerpts from witness statements

"An appointed board is not the answer. An appointed board will eliminate the voice of the community. It will eliminate community involvement…An elected school board is the answer. It is the answer because it puts people in positions that hold them accountable to those of us in the community who put them there…An appointed board is not the answer. What's the answer? Widespread community engagement."
Mr. Shaheer Ahktab, All Hands on KCMSD!

"The problem isn't money. It's not about the superintendent. It's not the kids' fault. Our students have been caught up in a 40-year vortex of dysfunctional leadership. The board has never been held accountable and many members are continually reelected by the same small set of self-serving supporters. Every past study of the Kansas City School District shows governance needs to be addressed and we have yet to do so…A board's most critical responsibility according to [Aspen Group International][10] is to safeguard the public's trust—a tenuous bond, that once violated, rarely can attain its former quality. We need change."
Mr. John Anderson, citizen

[10] Mr. Anderson was present for the seminar on school governance given by Randy Quinn of the Aspen Group International that is summarized in Section 2 of this report.

"Our focus here is on governance…and all of these community members here in this auditorium, it would be beautiful if we were talking about creating world-class schools, if we were in dialogue about student achievement. This appointed versus elected argument is marginal. Marginal effort yields marginal results…The answer is widespread community engagement. We agree that the system is broken…we have to be engaged, everyone, parents, students, community members. Everyone has to be engaged in the process of creating world-class schools…And if we're not about the business of being engaged in the lives of our children, we will not create world-class schools in this district with an appointed board or otherwise."
Mr. Spark Bookhart, All Hands on KCMSD!

"I believe in an elected school board member rather than an appointed board member. Voting is the right to choose and express our opinion…It is a privilege to vote, and I hope you don't want to take our voting rights away…We are aware, including the board, that the governance structure must change on how to do business…It is time for this board to be in the public eye for [positive reasons]: student achievement, student outcomes, for students not the adults. This is what education is about."
Ms. Yvonne Boyd, parent

"What I firmly believe, based on my career experience and time on the Board, is that a culture has developed that focuses on jobs, personal allegiances, contracts, and getting by rather than on students. Adult issues are overriding what's good for the kids. Too many people are locked in to this system that they're fighting to keep…The main point I want to make to you today is that student achievement district-wide will not improve significantly until this culture is replaced with a new culture of professionalism, high standards, appointments based on merit rather than on connections, and rigorous performance evaluation at all levels…To assure a real turnaround a change in the culture and a way of doing business you have to start at the top and replace the system that hasn't worked."
Dr. Bill Eddy, former member KCSMD Board of Education (from written statement)

"We believe at the heart of the district's decades of failure, low academic achievement, poor fiscal management and distrust by its patrons lies an ineffective governance structure. The current board structure fosters its members' politically-charged agendas resulting in a long history of conflict, micromanagement, and lack of transparency and accountability to the community as a whole…The current system for electing school board members is a far cry from the democratic process…very few candidates run for open positions and most seats are filled by members who run unopposed."

Ms. Melissa Eddy, president, Do The Right Thing For Kids (from written statement)

"When you have board members that don't quite know how a board functions, they tend to look for things to do. As a result, they tend to step over the line because they want to please their constituents. This is when board governance begins to breakdown, and contract seekers start appearing."

Mr. Carl Evans, The Black Agenda Group (from written statement)

"There are many issues that need to be addressed in this district, the primary one being student achievement. But I am frustrated with the idea that there is one quick easy solution, and I believe that addressing the needs of our students will not be solved by changing our board structure. Our union has had many differences with the school board over the years…but we as a union do honor the process for board members being elected in this community. We support the current board structure with both at-large and subdistrict members. In a district as racially and economically divided as ours, it is the only way to address the diversity of our population."

Ms. Andrea Flinders, American Federation of Teachers – Kansas City

"You'll hear a lot of concerns today. Some will talk about governance structures. Some will talk about the district at-large. But as a representative of the board, I want to talk to you about where our focus is. Our focus is on student achievement."

Ms. Cokethea Hill, member, KCMSD Board of Education

"School districts are not political entities that need their own democratic representation. School board members should act as trustees; they are not charged with enacting laws. People do not complain about appointed boards for public libraries and police departments. Why should schools be different? Besides, I'm not even convinced that what we have is a representative democracy. Since most of the school board members in Kansas City are elected in their subdistrict—even though they govern the entire district—I only get to vote for four of nine positions. So I don't think this so-called current democratic system actually gives me—a parent and taxpayer—much of a voice." (from written statement)

Ms. Nancy Lowdon, parent

"They talk about 40 years of failure but 36 of those years were generally under the tutelage of the United States District Court and monitoring committees at times when the [KCMSD] boards had little or no authority to really run the district. We finished with the District Court a few years ago, and we have struggled to figure out how to produce an organization that will educate the children. I think we are fast approaching that point

with the turnaround plan and the selection of a highly qualified superintendent with a track record of performance in districts like this one."

Mr. Joel Pelofsky, member, KCMSD Board of Education

"We acknowledge that too many or a majority of our young students in this district are below proficiency levels in reading and math, and this has been documented all over the state. But we ought to take into account that this district is currently immersed in a turnaround plan that was developed in collaboration with this district and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and this plan is on track to include a reevaluation in the year 2010…we believe a move toward changing the governance of the school board at this time would set back or derail the district's implementation of the turnaround plan to regain full accreditation. The district and DESE have invested in this plan and I believe a change in governance at this time would discount the investment of the teachers, the families, and the administration into making this plan work."

Rev. Margaret Roberts, MORE²

"It's a terrible thing when a community loses faith in its public schools. Change is needed in the governance of our Kansas City schools, and it's needed now before we fail another generation of our children. Every citizen knows and surveys confirm the quality of the public schools influence where people decide to live and where businesses decide to locate… until we fix our governance crisis in Kansas City, Missouri, we will continue to lose taxpayers and business."

Ms. Diane Ruggiero, Kansas City Regional Association of Realtors

"I know of no other city in the nation with 13 or more districts[11] within the geographical boundary of the city limits. And if history is correct, this occurred in 1954, and students of history know what occurred in 1954[12]. What we have today is a direct result of those who were in power at the time and decided to carve this city up[13]."

Ms. Sharon Sanders Brooks, member, City Council of Kansas City and former state representative

"The federal court, as part of the desegregation case, conducted an extensive investigation of board micromanagement and patronage…The court found no evidence of micromanagement or patronage in hiring or

[11] There are 11 school districts contained all or in part within the city limits of Kansas City. Please see footnote 3 on p.3 of this report.

[12] *Brown v. The Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

[13] For further information on changes in attendance areas in KCMSD see *Race, Real Estate, and Uneven Development: The Kansas City experience 1900-2000* by Kevin Fox Gotham.

awarding contracts. This board has worked very hard to turn around the image of the district and of the board. We are working with the Council of Great City Schools; we are working with DESE; we are working with MSBA; and now the superintendent has brought forth the [*inaudible*] Foundation to work with us on governance issues and the whole foundation of the school district so we can be successful."
Ms. Marilyn Simmons, president, KCMSD Board of Education

"The change has to come from inside each person. We can't look for some other expert, some other policy or procedure. We've got to do it for ourselves. And I know from my work, there are enough people to make that happen."
Ms. Vicky Smith, All Hands on KCMSD!

"[M]ost of the that time, 1986 through 2003, the KCMSD was supervised by what could only be described as an appointed board…In spite of the continued presence of an elected school board, the [Desegregation Monitoring Committee], with the power of the Federal Court, had complete control of the administration of the KCMSD…No KCMSD school board, operating beneath the umbrella of control of the Federal Court, had the level of governance we would truly expect from a school board in a democratic society"(from written statement). "This current school board, the first to be completely free of federal control, should not be lumped with KCMSD school boards of the past, particularly boards of the Jenkins[14] period. [The current board] represents opportunity and return of accountability that citizens expect of a democratic society and now the desire to eliminate the accountability that elected officials incur as a result of being elected and to reinstall an appointed board is simply undemocratic. The democratic board has not had the chance to yield the expected results and accountability. Let us not destroy the democratic process with another experiment in governance" (from public testimony).
Dr. Linwood Tauheed, Professor of Economics, University of Missouri-Kansas City

"From the first day I was employed by the district, I faced constant interferences and challenges from various board members. I would receive phone calls telling me what I needed to do. Some of these requests included telling me who to contract with, telling me I needed to buy billboards, telling me what projects needed to be the main focus."
Cynthia Wheeler-Linden, former KCMSD staff member

[14] *Jenkins v. Missouri*, 515 U.S. 70, (1995).

Appendix A

KCMSD Study Planning Meeting List[15]

NAME	LETTER	1ST CALL	2ND CALL	RESPONSE
Sen. Justus	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	Available 6/23-24
Rep. Curls	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. LeBlanc	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	Available 6/23
Rep. Hughes	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. Talboy	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	not available
Rep. Burnett	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. Low	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. Kander	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. Meiners	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	no response
Rep. Holsman	6/10/09	6/19/09	6/22/09	Available 6/26

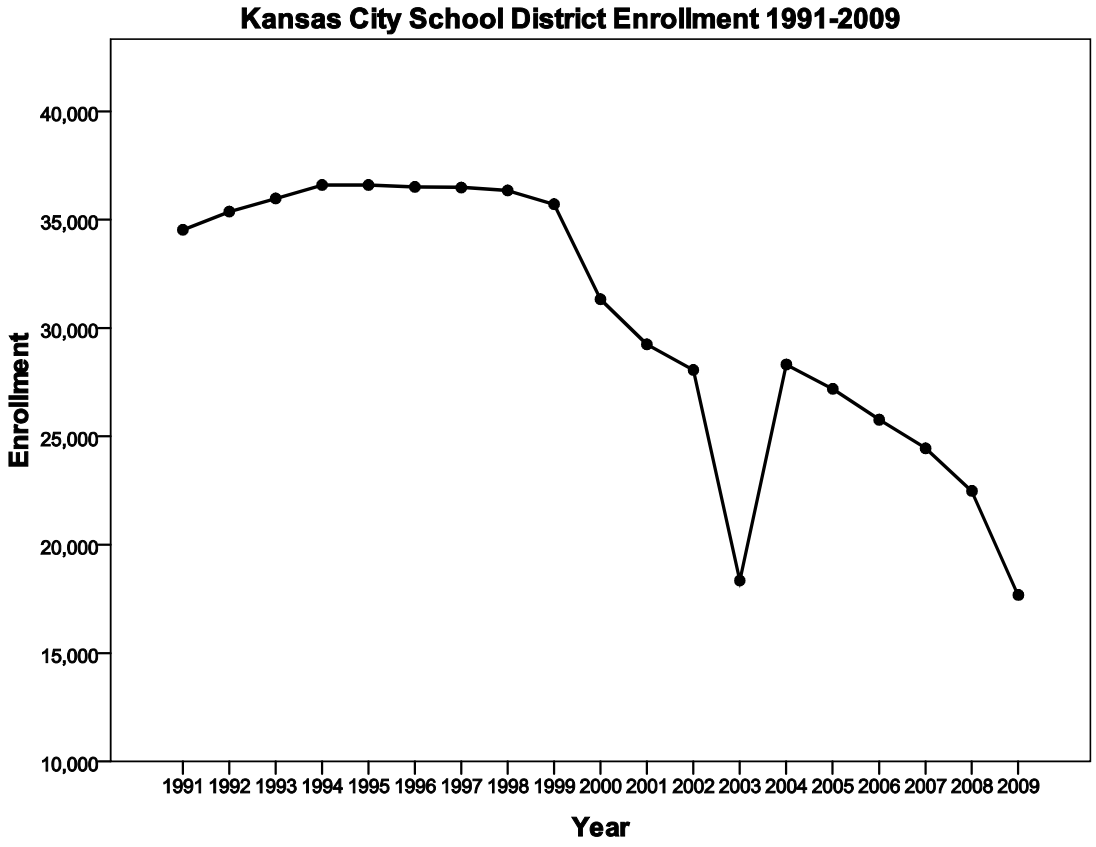
****** Rep. Hughes read the dates on the letter as meetings on the 23rd, 24th *and* the 26th. He is still interested and would like to know what was discussed.**

The meeting was held June 23, 2009, at Gates Restaurant in Kansas City.

[15] Information provided by Darsel Richmond, Administrative Assistant to Senator Yvonne Wilson.

Appendix B

KCMSD Enrollment Trends[16]



[16] Source: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Appendix C

Timeline of Kansas City Missouri School District Governance Changes Related to Desegregation[17]

1975	Federal government charges KCMSD illegally segregated and asks for desegregation plan. KCMSD Board of Education submits plan; plan is rejected.
1985	Desegregation Monitoring Committee established
1988	DMC allowed to interpret court orders when parties disagree
1993	KCMSD's motion to increase property tax denied. Court reaffirms authority of DMC to monitor KCMSD

[17] Source: House Research from the Final Report of the Joint Interim Committee on Desegregation and Finance, December 15, 1997.

Appendix D

Examples of School Districts with Appointed Boards

Baltimore[18]

- Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners has 9 voting members plus one student ex-officio member. Since 1997, members of the City Board have been jointly appointed by the mayor and the governor.
- 86,266 students in 201 schools.

Boston[19]

- Appointed board since 1991; (change in structure also reduced board size from 13 to 7 members).
- Candidates are nominated to the mayor by the Citizens Nominating Panel (parents, teachers, principals, business, and higher education).
- 55,800 students in 143 schools.

Chicago[20]

- Legislation for mayoral control passed in 1988; 1995 Mayor Daley appointed the first five-member Reform Board of Trustees; 1999 title changed back to Board of Education and expanded to seven members.
- 3rd largest district in U.S.; 407,000 students; 666 schools.

Cleveland[21]

- Board members and CEO appointed by the mayor since 1998; board has 9 regular members and 2 ex-officio.
- 50, 364 students; 114 schools.

Jackson, MS[22]

- The five-member Board of Trustees is appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council.
- 31,000 students in 59 schools

New York City[23]

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[18] Source: Baltimore City Public Schools. http://www.bcps.k12.md.us/School_Board/index.asp
[19] Source: Boston Public Schools. http://www.bostonpublicschools.org/
[20] Source: Chicago Public Schools. http://www.cps.edu/Pages/home.aspx
[21] Source: Cleveland Public Schools. http://www.cmsdnet.net/
[22] Source: Jackson Public Schools. http://www.jackson.k12.ms.us/content.aspx?url=/page/schoolboard&
[23] Source: New York City Department of Education. http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm

- Largest public school system in the United States; 1.1 million students in 1,500 schools
- Panel for Educational Policy replaced the Board of Education in 2002 when Mayor Bloomberg gained control.
- 13 members: 8 are appointed by the mayor including the chancellor who serves as the chair; one member is nominated from each of the five borough presidents

Philadelphia[24]

- Governed by the School Reform Commission (SRC) since 2001. Of the five members of the SRC, three are appointed by the governor, and two are appointed by the mayor.
- 163,064 students in 284 schools

*For size comparison, Kansas City Public Schools serves approximately 18,000 students in 64 schools.[25]

[24] Source: Philadelphia Public Schools. http://www.phila.k12.pa.us/.
[25] Source: Kansas City Missouri School District. http://www2.kcmsd.net/Pages/AboutKCMSD.aspx